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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/465,396 | 12/17/1999 | MICHAEL R. STINSON | 12553-US | 8821 |

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EXAMINER

PENDLETON, BRIAN T

| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|
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2644

DATE MAILED: 07/08/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/465,396

Applicant(s)

STINSON ET AL.

Examiner

Brian T. Pendleton

Art Unit

2644

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 March 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 41-90 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 41-68, 70-75, 77, 78 and 82-90 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 69, 76 and 79 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 80 and 81 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 December 1999 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant questions if the restriction requirement sent on 2/23/05 replaces the requirement sent on 10/19/04. The restriction requirement sent on 2/23/05 did replace the prior one.

Applicant's election with traverse of the restriction requirement in the reply filed on 3/23/05 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that groups I and III fall in the same class and their search would not involve undue burden. This is not found persuasive because their search involves undue burden and the search would be different for each group even though they fall in the same classification.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claims 41-68, 70-75, 77, 78 and 82-90 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected invention and species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on 3/23/05. As a result, claims 69, 76, and 79-81 are examined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 69 and 76 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Elko, US Patent 6,041,127. In figures 22-24, Elko discloses a microphone apparatus comprising a plurality of microphones 2401-2406, diffracting structure (figure 22) and a processor 2313. the processor takes account the modifying effect of the diffracting structure (see column 14 lines 12-67).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 79 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elko in view of McCormick et al, US Patent 5,808,243. Elko does not disclose that the surface of the diffracting structure has an open-cellular structure. McCormick discloses a microphone apparatus having an open celled foam shield. The foam is used for prevent the microphone from sensing noise. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify Elko to have an open-celled foam structure for the purpose of improving sound transducing.

Allowable Subject Matter

Art Unit: 2644

Claims 80 and 81 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian T. Pendleton whose telephone number is (571) 272-7527. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sinh Tran can be reached on (571) 272-7564. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Brian T. Pendleton
Examiner
Art Unit 2644



btp